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CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

1. (Currently amended) A method ~~for a parent device to access a service of a child device in a driver stack, the method comprising:~~

creating a virtual device object representing a parent device;
binding the virtual device object to the parent device;
inserting the virtual device object in the driver stack below the a child device; and
accessing the a service of the child device by the parent device with a request
from the virtual device object on behalf of the parent device;
receiving at the virtual device object a remove query to remove the driver stack;
sending the remove query from the virtual device object to the parent device;
releasing by the parent device the service of the child device;
approving the remove query after the parent device has released the service of the
child device;
passing the remove query from the virtual device object to the child device
immediately above the virtual device object in the driver stack; and
completing the remove query by removing the driver stack.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the driver stack is a dynamic driver stack.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) A method according to claim 2, wherein accessing the service of the child device includes incrementing a reference count of a number of users of the service of the child device.

5. (Original) A method according to claim 2, wherein binding the virtual device object includes arranging the parent device to receive a the remove query from ~~to remove the dynamic driver stack sent to the~~ virtual device.

6. (Currently canceled) Please cancel Claim 6 without prejudice.

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7. (Currently canceled) Please cancel Claim 7 without prejudice
8. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 2 6, wherein releasing the service of the child device includes invoking a code within the virtual device object that accesses the parent device.
9. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 2 4, wherein releasing the service of the child device includes decrementing a reference count of a number of users of the service of the child device.
10. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein accessing the service of the child device includes accessing a second service of a second child device above the virtual device object in the dynamic driver stack.
11. (Currently amended) An article comprising:
a storage medium, said storage medium having stored thereon instructions, that, when executed by a computing device, result in:
creating a virtual device object representing a parent device;
binding the virtual device object to the parent device;
inserting the virtual device object in the driver stack below the a child device; and
accessing the a service of the child device by the parent device with a request
from the virtual device object on behalf of the parent device;
receiving at the virtual device object a remove query to remove the driver stack;
sending the remove query from the virtual device object to the parent device;
releasing by the parent device the service of the child device;
approving the remove query after the parent device has released the service of the
child device;
passing the remove query from the virtual device object to the child device
immediately above the virtual device object in the driver stack; and
completing the remove query by removing the driver stack.

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12. (Original) An article according to claim 11, wherein the driver stack is a dynamic driver stack.
13. (Canceled)
14. (Original) An article according to claim 12, wherein accessing the service of the child device includes incrementing a reference count of a number of users of the service of the child device.
15. (Currently amended) An article according to claim 12, wherein binding the virtual device includes arranging the parent device to receive a the remove query to remove the dynamic driver stack sent to the virtual device object.
16. (Currently canceled) Please cancel Claim 16 without prejudice.
17. (Currently canceled) Please cancel Claim 17 without prejudice.
18. (Currently amended) An article according to claim 12-16, wherein releasing the service of the child device includes invoking a code within the virtual device object that accesses the parent device.
19. (Currently amended) An article according to claim 12-16, wherein releasing the service of the child device includes decrementing a reference count of a number of users of the service of the child device.
20. (Currently amended) An article according to claim 12, wherein accessing the service of the child device includes accessing a second service of a second child device above the virtual device object in the dynamic driver stack.

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21. (Currently amended) An apparatus supporting removal of a driver stack, the apparatus comprising:
- a computer including a hardware component requiring the driver stack;
 - an operating system running on the computer;
 - the driver stack loaded onto the operating system and supporting the hardware component, the driver stack including at least a parent driver and a child driver, the child driver providing a service accessed by the parent driver; and
 - a virtual driver object representing the parent driver, the virtual driver object bound to the parent driver and installed below the child driver in the driver stack, the virtual device object capable of receiving a remove query to remove the driver stack, the virtual device object further capable of sending the remove query to the parent device, the virtual device object approving the remove query after the parent device has released the service of the child device, the virtual device object then passing the remove query to the child device immediately above the virtual device object in the driver stack; and a request from the virtual device on behalf of the parent driver to access the service provided by the child driver.
22. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the operating system is designed to support dynamic removal of the driver stack.
23. (Currently canceled) Please cancel Claim 23 without prejudice.
24. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the parent driver is adapted to insert the virtual driver object into the driver stack before accessing the service provided by the child driver.
25. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the child driver includes a reference count of a number of users of the service.

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26. (Previously amended) An apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the parent driver is adapted to increment the reference count of the child driver before accessing the service provided by the child driver.

27. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the parent driver is adapted to decrement the reference count of the child driver after being informed by the virtual driver object that the driver stack is to be removed and stopping use of the service provided by the child driver.

28. (New) The method according to claim 10, wherein releasing the service of the child device includes releasing the second service of the second child device above the virtual device in the dynamic driver stack prior to completing the remove query.

29. (New) The article according to claim 20, wherein releasing the service of the child device includes releasing the second service of the second child device above the virtual device in the dynamic driver stack prior to completing the remove query.